



CENTRAL ARIZONA REGION ALTERNATE CARE SYSTEM WORKSHOP

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Alternate Care System Key Definitions

It's important that Central Arizona Region Alternate Care System (ACS) Workshop participants have a common understanding of key terms. To encourage this, the ACS team has created the following definitions as a reference for ACS Workshop participants. These broad definitions are intended to ensure workshop participants share a mutual understanding of key terms.

Alternate Care System (ACS)

This is a community-wide healthcare infrastructure that involves private offices and clinics, outpatient treatment centers, outpatient surgical centers (see *Alternate Care Facilities* for other examples); as well as emergency management, municipal agencies, public health and public safety in meeting the community's medical needs during a disaster.

An ACS plan delineates specific medical functions and treatment objectives for each ACS facility. It also ensures that patients are referred to available healthcare resources according to medical needs.

Alternate Care System Facilities

These healthcare providers help expand the capacity of a specific community to care for people during a public health emergency or disaster. Examples of *alternate care system facilities* include:

Outpatient Treatment Centers

- Community Health Centers
- Primary Care Clinics
 - Private Physician Offices
 - Licensed Clinics
- Urgent Care Centers
- Imaging Centers
- Physical and Occupational Therapy
- Outpatient Treatment Centers Providing Dialysis Services, Medical Services, and Nursing Services

Outpatient Surgical Centers

- Endoscopy
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedic
- Pain Centers
- Multi Specialty Surgical Centers

Special Hospitals

- Pediatric
- Cardiac
- Rehabilitation
- Acute Long Term Care
- Surgical
- Orthopedic

Additional ACS Facilities are:

- Assisted Living Facilities,
- Nursing Homes, and
- Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF).

Medical Surge

Medical surge is the capability to rapidly expand the capacity of the existing healthcare system (long term care facilities, community health agencies, acute care facilities, alternate care facilities and public health departments) in order to provide triage and subsequent medical care. This includes providing definitive care to individuals at the appropriate clinical level of care, within sufficient time to achieve recovery and minimize medical complications. The capability applies to an event resulting in a number or type of patients that overwhelm the day-to-day acute-care medical capacity. This may not be a declared disaster situation.

Disaster

This is a large-scale event or occurrence that overwhelms the healthcare delivery system and hampers the system's ability to respond to the medical needs of the community. There are two types of disasters: *catastrophic events* and *pervasive events*. Below are some of the characteristics of each of these events:

Catastrophic Events

- Occur suddenly with little or no notice.
- Require immediate response.
- Can be an intentional act or a natural disaster.
- May involve mass casualties.
- *Examples:* earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, acts of terrorism.

Pervasive Events

- Slow onset that gradually worsens.
- Allows opportunity to gradually "ramp-up" response.
- Can be an intentional act or a natural disaster.
- May involve mass casualties.
- *Examples:* floods, wildfires, pandemics.